

Technology in Rural Transportation

A recent study documented more than eighty proven, cost-effective, “low-tech” solutions to rural transportation needs, most developed or implemented by local transportation professionals. One of these solutions is outlined below:



Learn all about the simple solutions on the Internet at <http://inform.enterprise.prog.org>

The simple solutions report is available from Hau To at (503) 892-2533, or email: to@crc-corp.com

Data Gathering and Processing System

Overall goal: To collect and assemble real-time and predictive statewide road and weather information.

Technical approach: The first step was to create a highly dense database of Washington State weather observations. The Northwest Regional Weather Consortium is a group of local, state, and federal agencies that pool together data from weather measuring devices located around the State. Sources include agricultural monitoring networks, air pollution sensing stations, airport monitoring stations and DOT Environmental Sensor stations. Together, nearly 400 sites statewide report weather conditions.

The second step was to use a high-resolution weather prediction system to generate detailed weather forecasts around the State. This system supplies detailed forecasts for WSDOT and other government agencies around the State.

The third step was to develop a road condition prediction model for use with observed and forecasted weather conditions. The pavement condition model helps maintenance crews make decisions about when and where to apply treatments to the road.

Collectively, all the weather data is assembled and processed to also support the public sector traveler information system.

Current The project is underway. A beta system is operational and can be viewed at



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status:	http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Rweather Available from the site are weather conditions across Washington, mountain pass information, radio messages (played using RealAudio), radar, and road conditions.
Location / geographic scope:	Statewide throughout Washington.
Agencies involved:	Washington Department of Transportation, University of Washington, Northwest Regional Weather Consortium
Cost information:	The project is paid for by a \$1.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation and \$312,500 from WSDOT.
Key contacts:	Bill Brown, WSDOT (206) 616-6183
Have goals been achieved?	It is currently too soon to assess the success of the system.
Solution timeline:	The system has been deployed and expansion and assessment is planned for the next few years.

